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MARYLAND FISHERIES

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FISHERY LEGISLATION NOW PENDING BEFORE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

POTOMAC RIVER LEGISLATION

EARLY in the present session, of the General Assembly, Senator Harry T. Phoebus of Somerset County introduced a bill, known as S. B. No. 5, repealing Section 75-A of Article 72 of the Annotated Code of Maryland, title, "Oysters," subtitle, "Potomac." In other words, if this bill is passed, the Potomac river, as far as Maryland is concerned, is open to dredging under the same conditions as before the closing of the river in 1931, i. e., dredge boats of unlimited tonnage with heavy dredges using power winders could operate in the river as they do in other sections of the Chesapeake Bay at this time. However, before this law could become effective, it would have to be concurred in by Virginia, and the attitude of the Commission of Fisheries of Virginia at present is against large dredge boats with heavy dredges.

H. B. 237, introduced by Delegate P. Elliott Burroughs of Wicomico County, concurs with the bill passed by the General Assembly of Virginia in 1931, permitting the use of hand scrapes in the Potomac. It reads as follows:

> "It shall be lawful, between the 1st day of November and the 1st day of January of each year, and at no other time, for any citizen of Virginia or of Maryland, complying with the provisions of this section,

to take or catch marketable oysters with hand scrapes, not exceeding 40 pounds in weight or 36 inches in width, from the Potomac river; provided, however, that it shall be unlawful to take or catch oysters by hand scrapes, under the provisions of this section, between the hours of sundown and sunrise. Any citizen of this State desiring to take or catch oysters with hand scrapes from the Potomac river shall first obtain, by application to the oyster inspector of the district wherein he may reside, or the proper authorities of Virginia, in case of citizens of Virginia, a license for each boat to be so used, the license fee to be $10 for each boat. It shall be unlawful for any boat licensed under the provisions of this section to have on it more than 3 persons or more than one scrape or any winding apparatus or attachment of any kind whatsoever. It shall be lawful to use boats propelled by power or otherwise in taking oysters by hand scrapes under the provisions of this section. Any person violating the provisions of this section, upon conviction thereof, shall be punished by a fine of $25 for the first offense and for each succeeding offense $75, or by confiscation of his boat, equipment and cargo, or both, in the discretion of the court or jury trying the case.

"In any prosecution for the violation of this section, the possession of a hand scrape in a boat on the Potomac river shall be *prima facie* evidence that the boat was being used for hand scraping purposes."

Virginia is most anxious for Maryland to concur in this legislation. However, a number of objections have developed to hand scraping. First, Maryland has over 4,000 tongers, and if this bill should become a law, any number or all of these oystermen would have a right to come to Potomac river by taking out a $10 license for each boat. It would be difficult to estimate the effect of a large number of hand scrapers working on the bars of Potomac river, and while the pending bill provides for the taking of oysters only during November and December, the supply of oysters on the rocks might be so seriously reduced in two weeks as to dangerously affect the future condition of the rocks. Second: the tributaries of the Potomac on the Maryland side are used exclusively for tonging. If scrape boats were permitted to operate in the river proper they would have the privilege of anchoring at night, or any other time, in these tributary waters. Equipped with hand scrapes there would be a serious temptation to work on the tongers' bars.

The General Assembly of Maryland in 1933, realizing the limited amount of protection afforded the tonging areas on the northerly side of the Potomac, passed a Joint Resolution directing the Conservation Commissioner of Maryland to confer with the Commissioner of Fisheries of Virginia, in order that certain indentations and coves on the Maryland side might be set aside exclusively for the tongers. Virginia passed a similar resolution, and the two Commissioners made a tentative agreement setting aside three areas adjacent to St. Mary's County and one adjacent to Charles County where

better protection to the tongers seemed desirable. Up to this time these areas have not been included in any of the bills introduced in the General Assembly.

House Bill 250 introduced by Delegate Carl P. Evans of Somerset County, provides for the taking of oysters between the 1st day of November and the 1st day of January by citizens of Maryland and Virginia complying with the provisions of this section, "to take or catch marketable oysters with dredges not exceeding 70 pounds in weight," except between the hours of sundown and sunrise.

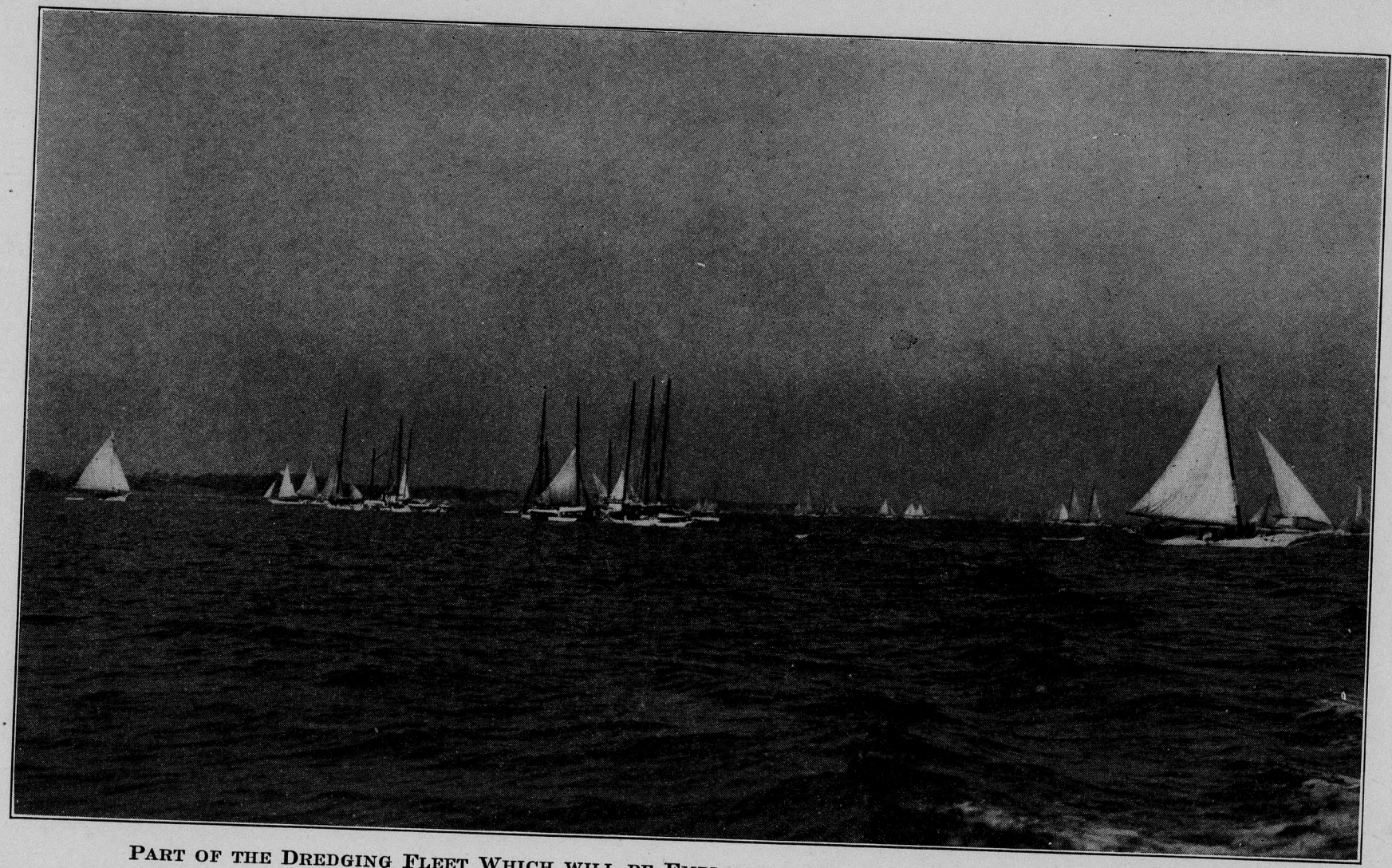
The weight of the dredge seems to be a very important factor in preserving the natural oyster bar, and it is thought a light dredge using sail power would do least harm to the oyster rocks.

At the time this goes to press, Senator Phoebus' bill came out of the committee with a unfavorable report, but on the floor of the Senate, the bill was accepted, and by amendment giving broader jurisdiction to the Conservation Commissioner, the bill was advanced to the third reading.

Realizing the uselessness of passing an act in Maryland that would not be acceptable to Virginia in opening the Potomac river to other means of taking oysters than by hand tongs, Senator J. Allan Coad of St. Mary's County arranged a meeting between Senator Phoebus, the delegation from Somerset and the Conservation Commissioner, at which it was agreed to have Commissioner Armstrong of Virginia come to Annapolis in order to pass on one of these Potomac river bills, which could then be so amended as to be acceptable to Virginia. This seems to be the only way in which the watermen would be enabled to work in the Potomac river with dredges by November 1936, as the General Assembly of Virginia does not meet until January 1936.

OTHER OYSTER MEASURES

Another bill that is of special interest to the oyster dredgers of Chesapeake Bay is House Bill 86, introduced by Delegate Glenwood Hoffman of Somerset County. This bill provides for a reduction in the license per gross ton of dredge boats operating in Maryland waters from $3.50 per ton to $2.



PART OF THE DREDGING FLEET WHICH WILL BE EMPLOYED IN TAKING SEED OYSTERS DURING APRIL

The Conservation Commissioner was called before the Ways and Means Committee to pass on the merits of this bill. He informed the committee that in his opinion the present license on large dredge boats was too great for the short period in which they have been able to take oysters in recent years. Formerly the large dredge boats would have the advantage over the smaller vessels by being able to stay down the Bay longer and carry a larger cargo to the market. This condition is now changed, and the large dredge boat is handicapped by a large crew and greater operating expenses. Since the Potomac has been closed this type of vessel has had difficulty in paying the license. Several years ago the Conservation Department offered a bill to the Legislature to make a maximum fee of $75 for any boat engaged in dredging in Chesapeake Bay. At the present time, 19 dredge boats pay over $75, and the largest boat engaged during the present season was 51 gross tons, on which the license is $178.50. The Commissioner thought $2 per ton was too low for the average boat, but recommended that the license be reduced to $2.50. The Hoffman bill was accordingly amended.

S. B. 240, introduced by Senator Milton L. Veasey of Worcester County amends Chapter 77 of the Acts of 1933, providing that certain waters in Worcester County shall not be subject to leasing for a period of two years. In the lower part of Chincoteague Bay where residents of Worcester have been planting for some years, and which section is not materially affected by the inlet, these oyster planters have experienced a condition which it is believed will be remedied after the inlet and the dredging incident thereto are completed. For this reason it has been thought advisable to delay leasing "in that part of Chincoteague Bay lying south of a line drawn from the mouth of Tenthouse Creek (as shown on Conservation Department Chart No. 2 on file in the office of the Clerk of the Court of Worcester County), thence running due east to the beach on the eastern side of Chincoteague Bay above Sugar Point," until the salinity of the waters therein is sufficient to warrant leasing, but not to delay it beyond June 1, 1937.

The leasing of bottoms north of this line will be made as rapidly as the applications come in, and up to this time, there have been quite a number received through the Conservation Department.

Another oyster bill which created considerable interest and about which there was a wide difference of opinion is known

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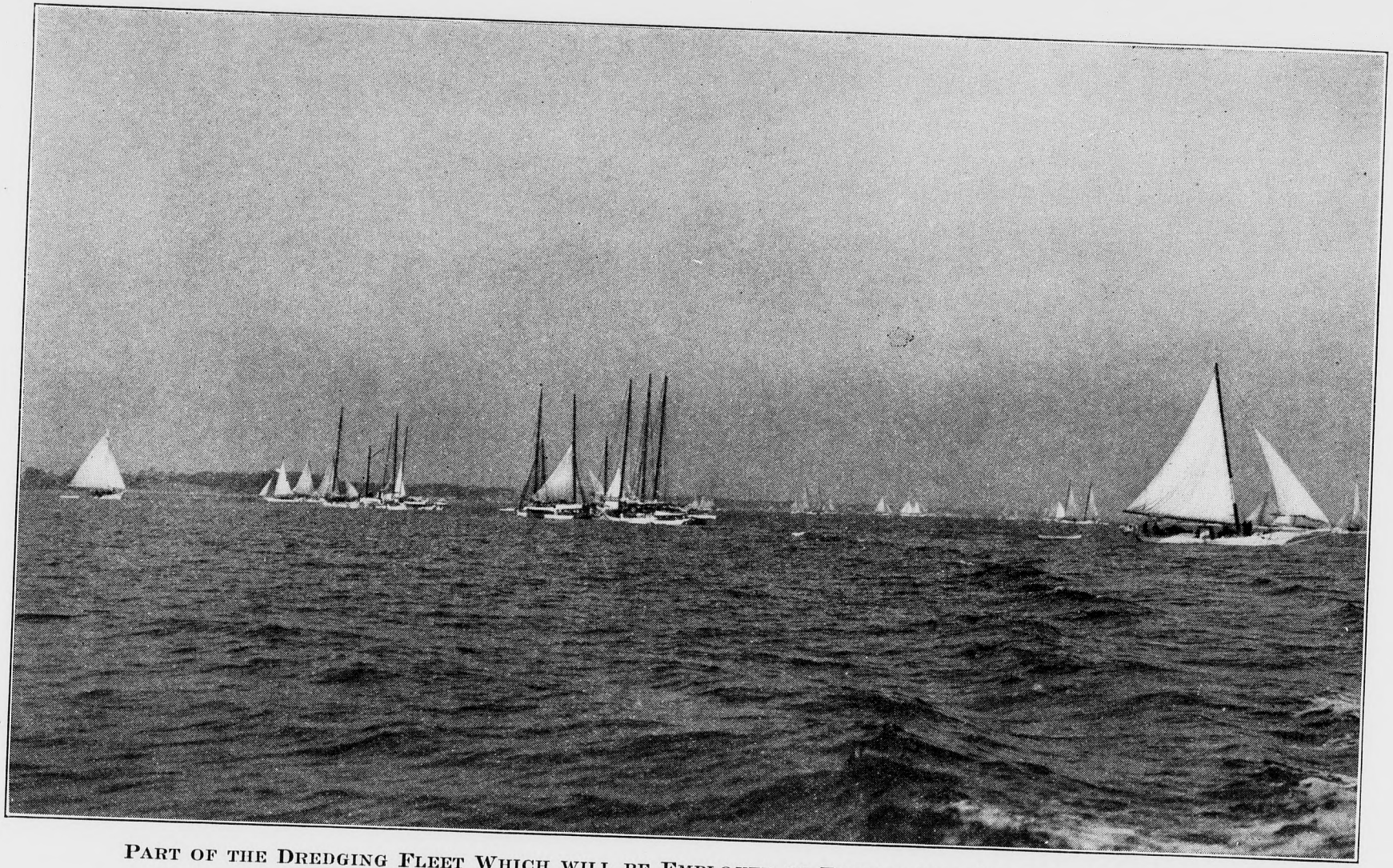

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as H. B. 146, sponsored by the Queen Anne, Talbott and Dorchester delegations. This bill would change the legal size of the oyster, which is now 3″ from the hinge to mouth, to 2½″, which was the law prior to 1927. At the hearing which took place in Annapolis during the last part of February, the sentiment prevailed for the 3″ cull law, in order to hold up the standard of the Maryland oyster. It was brought out, however, that all bars do not grow uniform shaped oysters, and that 2½″ round oysters would shuck more than 3″ long oysters. However, with the exception of a few places, it was pointed out that oysters would readily grow to 3″. This bill is still in the House.

One of the Conservation Department measures introduced in the General Assembly this year is S. B. 447, introduced by Senator J. Allan Coad. This bill prohibits "the planting and importation or transportation of seed or merchantable oysters in the State of Maryland from another state, when the same are infected by the oyster drill or screw borer, and authorizing the Conservation Commissioner to inspect oysters imported into the state and to seize and destroy any so infected wherever the same may be found."

The Conservation Department feels that this is a very important bill, due to the fact that enemies of the oysters are increasing, and strenuous efforts are being made to combat the starfish along the New England coast and the leech in the waters of Florida.

The oyster drill has already made serious inroads on the oysters of this region as well as Virginia. Somerset and Worcester Counties have been especially affected by the ravages of the screw borer. This bill will enable the state to cooperate with the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries which is waging a war against oyster enemies and pests, as mentioned elsewhere in this issue of MARYLAND FISHERIES.

CRABS

A bill introduced by Senator Harry T. Phoebus, S. B. 416 provides for the purchase and transplanting in the waters of Somerset County of spawn crabs at such time as the Conservation Department may deem most advisable. Two years ago, the Conservation Department brought over from the waters of Chincoteague Bay near Franklin City, Virginia, a

number of baskets of egg-bearing crabs in trucks which were immediately placed in the waters of Somerset County. The Department understood that the experiment was a success. However, the value of the plan was questioned by Dr. R. V. Truitt of the Biological Laboratory, who stated that his experiments with sponge crabs at the laboratory last summer were not successful.

While the Conservation Department feels that the proper way to increase the crab supply of Maryland is to have Virginia concur in the full protection of the sponge crab in Virginia waters, it is felt, nevertheless, that the experiment with the transplanting of sponge crabs is worth making. With Virginia persisting in her course of destroying the sponge crabs, which is reflected in the annually decreasing supply in Maryland, we must take every step that promises relief.

It is the opinion of the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries that if crabs placed in the waters of Somerset are taken from other waters where the density is about equal, the eggs may hatch out. The fact that sponge crabs are found in Somerset would seem to indicate that the plan of transplanting sponge crabs may prove feasible. It is, therefore, recommended that it be tried on a small scale, and the crabs should be tagged and carefully observed during the next two years. The Conservation Department feels that it would then be in a position to advise the General Assembly further on this matter.

FISH

The black bass bill, which has been introduced in the General Assembly at a number of sessions in the past, is now before this body. This bill was introduced late in the session, but it has many friends, and it is hoped that this valuable fish will be properly protected in the commercial as well as the fresh water streams of the state.

H. B. 445, introduced by the Garrett County delegation, calls for the Conservation Commissioner to make a thorough survey of the Youghiogheny river and its tributaries for the purpose of determining the amount of pollution and with a view of eliminating and remedying same. It is also requested that this stream be stocked with bass and rainbow trout. At a meeting of the Fish and Game Committee held in Annapolis, both Commissioner Earle and Game Warden LeCompté were present. The Garrett delegation were informed that the survey would be made of the Youghiogheny river and that during

the last two years the pollution therein had materially decreased. It is hoped that the river will shortly be sufficiently clean to maintain fish life.

The same delegation offered a Joint Resolution (No. 24) providing for a fish screen to be placed over the intake at the mouth of the tunnel to Deep Creek Lake in Garrett County. The Commissioner informed the delegates that the matter would be taken up with the power company and it was felt that their cooperation would be obtained in the placing of such a screen. The Commissioner also stated that it was his opinion that not as many fish go through the intake pipe as was thought; nevertheless, every effort will be made to protect the fish that are placed in Deep Creek Lake for the anglers.

LOANS TO THE FISHING INDUSTRY

THE CONSERVATION DEPARTMENT would especially like to call the attention of fish, oyster and crab packers of Maryland to the act of Congress, which went into effect February 1, 1935, and which enables any fishery plant to borrow money through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation. We believe that many of our people may wish to avail themselves of this opportunity to secure Government aid to help them carry their load until prices are adjusted.

All those desiring further information on the procedure for obtaining loans should write to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation at Richmond, Virginia, which is the headquarters for the Chesapeake Bay district.

FISHERY EDUCATION PROGRAM IN PROGRESS

IN RESPONSE to requests of members of the Fishing Industry, a meeting was called in the office of the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries, Washington, D. C., to consider the proposal offered by Deputy Commissioner Charles E. Jackson to hold a National Fishery Congress and Exposition in Washington during the coming spring. Members of the industry from all parts of the country responded with their presence on January 16. The greatest possible interest has been manifested in the plan.

In his greetings to the men of the industry present, Commissioner Frank T. Bell, in stating the purpose of the meeting,

emphasized that while the Bureau of Fisheries could not become involved in any way in the promotional end of the distribution of fishery products, it desired to offer its full cooperation to the industry, through its facilities, in working out a broader program of education and to impress upon the American people the food value of fishery products. He pointed out the forthcoming shortage in meat products, as a natural result of the drought conditions which prevailed in the midwest, and urged the industry to mobilize and prepare to furnish fish foods to offset this shortage.

Reports on the responses received from all units of the industry to the proposal disclosed widespread and enthusiastic interest. The meeting was then turned over to the representatives of the industry present. R. P. Fletcher, Jr., president of Booth Fisheries Corporation, Chicago, was selected as chairman.

After a general discussion, a committee was appointed to consider all information presented and to bring in recommendations. At the afternoon session the committee brought in a report expressing the opinion that the time was inadequate to make plans for a National Fisheries Congress and Exposition this spring, but affirmed the great need for the industry to undertake immediately an EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM on the dietry values of fish. It was pointed out that the industry was now entering the busiest part of its season and that the Fisheries Congress should be the culmination of a well organized fishery educational program. The committee recommended that a sub-committee be appointed to immediately inaugurate an EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM, with the cooperation of the Bureau of Fisheries. The following subcommittee was appointed:

HARDEN F. TAYLOR, *President,* Atlantic Coast Fisheries Corporation, New York, N. Y., *Chairman.*

B. D. BARKER, Bay State Fishing Company, Boston,

GEORGE H. DIETER, *President,* Palmetto Fish and Oyster Company, Columbia, S. C.

Resolution was then adopted expressing the appreciation of the group assembled for the cooperation of the Bureau of Fisheries. The meeting was adjourned.

This committee commenced at once to formulate plans and held a second conference on January 31, at the bureau's office.

(*Continued on Page* 18)

MARYLAND FISHERIES

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SWEPSON EARLE, COMMISSIONER.

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PRODUCTION AND MARKETING

THE HUE AND CRY raised by the critics of the Conservation Department since last fall that oyster production of Maryland had fallen so low as to endanger the livelihood of our citizens dependent thereon, and that the production was on the decrease, can be answered by pointing to the following figures. In 1932 the production was 1,616,139 bushels, in 1933 it was 1,804,552, and the present season (1934-35), to March 12, shows that 2,022,000 bushels have been marketed, which would assure a production at the close of the season of over 2,100,000 bushels—the greatest the State has had since 1927, when shell planting was first begun on a large scale in Maryland waters.

Those who are familiar with the oyster situation in Maryland, will agree that had oysters been fat this year the production would have exceeded 2,500,000 bushels. Because they were poor and therefore had small commercial value, they were left on the bottoms. Even in the Bay sections, adjacent to St. Mary's County, a boat can catch 200 bushels of large oysters near Point No Point Lighthouse in a day, but these oysters are so thin as to be unmerchantable. Fortunately the dredging fleet did not attempt to take these and similar oysters in the Chesapeake Bay south of Sandy Point, and they remain on the bottoms until next season, when it is hoped their condition will be better.

Poor oysters were not only found in the Bay this season, but the same condition prevailed in many of the tributary waters, including lower Patuxent River, Holland Point and parts of the Sisters Bar, Miles River, Wye River, and the greater part of the Choptank and Little Choptank Rivers.

If Maryland had produced 3,000,000 bushels of oysters this year the price per bushel would have been materially lower than it was, and there would have been more waste. The Con-

servation Commissioner feels that the three-inch cull law has helped to hold up the standard (and consequently the price) in Maryland, and to reduce the legal size of oysters would decrease the quality of Standards, when the need of the industry is for more Selects and Counts.

As was pointed out in the Department's annual report for 1934, even with the three-inch cull law on the natural bars, in order to get a better grade of oysters it becomes necessary either to close certain bars that have been stocked with shells and seed oysters until the oysters grow to proper sizes, or else resort to private planting.

In 1928, according to the statistics of the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries, there were consumed in this country 3,000,000,000 pounds of sea food. In 1932, according to the same source of information, this had been reduced to 2,000,000,000 pounds. Does this mean that the production has dropped to this extent, or is it due to a decreased demand? The Commissioner feels that the production has fallen off becaues of lack of demand and because there has been no effort made by the several associations concerned with the fishing industry and the industry itself to stimulate this demand.

At the present time the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries is considering plans to increase the consumption of sea food. Hon. George L. Radcliffe, our junior Senator from Maryland, who comes from the tidewater Eastern Shore, has shown great interest in the question and is determined to assist in securing whatever national legislation is required.

Supply and demand naturally govern prices of sea food or any other commodity. However, when the demand and supply are more nearly balanced, prices are stabilized and the catcher and producer may expect a fair return for their efforts, which return should not, however, be so high as to be exhorbitant to the consumer. During the present oyster season occasional prices received by the catcher have been as low as the Department ever remembers them. One instance can be cited in St. Mary's River, where 4-inch oysters taken by tongers and loaded on a boat sold for 15c. a bushel early in March. There seems no excuse for such prices. While price-fixing is prohibited by the NRA Code, it would certainly seem reasonable to have a minimum beyond which oysters, fish and other water products should not be sold, because it may be justly termed a waste to market valuable sea food at a loss.

The Conservation Commissioner would urge those who bemoan the low production of oysters in Maryland and blame the

Department for this condition to bend their efforts to securing better marketing condition for our water crops and increasing the consumption, which would be more helpful to our sea-food industry and those citizens who depend upon it for a livelihood.

WHAT MARYLAND IS DOING FOR THE FRESH-WATER ANGLER

BY TALBOTT DENMEAD

IN THE SPRING TIME men's and some women's fancies lightly turn towards thoughts of trout fishing, so that no more appropriate season than the present could be selected for the subject of what Maryland is doing for the anglers. Let us check up on some of the things you get for your little $1.25 license if you are a resident, or $5.50 if you are unfortunately a non-resident. Those of you who know me are familiar with my opinion of non-resident hunting and fishing licenses with fees all out of proportion to services rendered; for those who do not know my views on the subject, I may say in general, and briefly, I am against them.

Speaking of licenses, it may interest you to know that Delaware has just passed a law requiring non-resident anglers to pay $7.50 for an annual fishing license. To offset this rather high fee to fish a small state composed of only three counties, non-resident ladies do not require any license if they are fishing with hubby or their boy friend who has a license. Also the law provides for a six-day non-resident angler's license for $3.25. But the best things in the new Delaware law to me are the sections that prohibit the sale of black bass regardless of where taken, and extend the closed season to June 25, allowing these game fish to spawn an additional month undisturbed by anglers. So my hat is off to neighbor Delaware—the 35th State to join the complete no-sale of black bass honor column. Will Maryland do likewise before the Legislature adjourns early in April?

But this is off the main track. What do we get for our Maryland angler's license fee? To the fellow who wants the earth for a dollar, to the one who is not satisfied unless he gets six rainbows over 10 inches out of every hole, this may be a disappointment; I hope so! But to the real Waltonian who uses his bean as well as his bait, to the one who considers

what it costs to build and maintain fish hatcheries, to pay capable fish culturists, who knows how hard it is to prevent chislers from fishing before the opening day, I am sure this resumé will convince him that he never in his life received so much for such a small investment.

Let me say I am a trout fisherman and have been all my life; I have fished in Maryland's trout streams and stocked them with trout before many of you were born; but I have never had two more successful trout fishing seasons than the past two. I attribute my success to the excellent work of the Maryland Conservation Department and to the activities and ability of the two men directly responsible for the propagation and restocking in Maryland. I refer to Dr. Swepson Earle, Conservation Commissioner at present, and Albert M. Powell, superintendent of Hatcheries. How long Dr. Earle will be with us officially I do not know. I believe his present term expires the first Monday in June. I hope, if and when there is a change in that office, we will get a man somewhere near as good. I use the singular for the bill or bills now pending at Annapolis, for a three-man commission does not appear to have been prepared for the purpose of improving our Conservation Department.

The sportsmen are certainly assured of good trout fishing this coming season, opening April 1. If they don't catch fish it will not be for the reason that there have been no fish liberated. From January, 1934, to October, 1934, 165,000 legal trout of three species were liberated in the waters of 10 counties east of the Chesapeake Bay, 25,000 over legal-sized brook, brown and rainbow trout have been put in the streams recently, and as many more are being held in readiness to replenish the supply as it is exhausted by the anglers. Three hundred and fifty thousand trout were hatched this past breeding season, and there will be a larger number of trout held over for next year than ever before. Incidentally and in addition the U. S. Bureau of Fisheries has furnished the state about 30,000 brown trout, fingerlings, for release at a later date.

Distributions to date show that practically all of the trout streams have been stocked with trout from 7 inches up to 5 pounds. Garrett, Allegheny, Washington, Frederick and Baltimore Counties have received their allotments, and the streams that are fished most heavily will be restocked during April and May. To date there have been put in Baltimore County streams 2,600 legal trout. The Conservation Department intends to keep Western Run well stocked to relieve

BEAR CREEK, GARRETT COUNTY, ONE OF MARYLAND'S FINE TROUT STREAMS

the pressure in the western counties, and give the Baltimore anglers, who contribute a large part of the license money, a place to fish without traveling 50 to 100 miles.

Raising trout is not all that is done with the license money, which, by the way has averaged less than $15,000 a year in recent years. In 1933 there were 12,757 resident and 527 non-resident licenses issued, with a total revenue of $14,800. There are black bass fishermen to try and satisfy; so black bass ponds have been constructed at Lewistown, and a large number of small-mouth bass will be raised in them this spring for distribution later. The ponds were built out of angler's license money.

And there is no sense in putting fish in unsuitable waters; so scientific surveys, biological they call them, must be made by qualified persons who have to be paid to live; the Conservation Department hopes to find money enough to make a bio-chemical and linnological survey this coming summer. We want to know what kind of water we are putting these fish into. Now can you tell me how all this is being done for $15,000 a year?

Now, honestly, don't you think you get more for your angler's license fee than for any equal amount you spend for other things. A half dozen dry flies will cost as much as a resident angler's license, or a carton of cigarettes, or a couple of moving pictures; the cost of a power-boat for one day's fishing on the Chesapeake Bay will buy two non-resident annual angler's licenses. You don't own the land on which you fish; some other fellow even pays the taxes on it for you; all you have to do is buy a license, and the money you pay for it will be used for your benefit. It is like eating your cake and having it too. Remember this when you are on another's property; respect his rights, or you will find the land posted next year.

Think it over—miles and miles of stocked streams—rainbows, brooks, and browns, rivers and lakes stocked with black bass; scientific investigations, construction of additional hatchery facilities, every year in the past few years, laws, laws and administration, all at a cost of $15,000 a year for the fresh-water anglers of Maryland.

It is easy to criticize and complain, hard to take off your coat and help the other fellow. But in the case of the angler when he helps the state to improve the fishing, he is actually helping himself. Why are some anglers so selfish they will not help?

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And there is no sense in putting fish in unsuitable waters; so scientific surveys, biological they call them, must be made by qualified persons who have to be paid to live; the Conservation Department hopes to find money enough to make a bio-chemical and linnological survey this coming summer. We want to know what kind of water we are putting these fish into. Now can you tell me how all this is being done for $15,000 a year?

Now, honestly, don't you think you get more for your angler's license fee than for any equal amount you spend for other things. A half dozen dry flies will cost as much as a resident angler's license, or a carton of cigarettes, or a couple of moving pictures; the cost of a power-boat for one day's fishing on the Chesapeake Bay will buy two non-resident annual angler's licenses. You don't own the land on which you fish; some other fellow even pays the taxes on it for you; all you have to do is buy a license, and the money you pay for it will be used for your benefit. It is like eating your cake and having it too. Remember this when you are on another's property; respect his rights, or you will find the land posted next year.

Think it over—miles and miles of stocked streams—rainbows, brooks, and browns, rivers and lakes stocked with black bass; scientific investigations, construction of additional hatchery facilities, every year in the past few years, laws, laws and administration, all at a cost of $15,000 a year for the fresh-water anglers of Maryland.

It is easy to criticize and complain, hard to take off your coat and help the other fellow. But in the case of the angler when he helps the state to improve the fishing, he is actually helping himself. Why are some anglers so selfish they will not help?

We anglers who fish in Maryland are indeed lucky, and when the dogwood is in blossom, I hope the browns and the rainbows and the brooks will rise readily to your flies. If you don't get them every time you go out, you will have had the fresh air and the exercise. But you will get them if you know your business—for the trout are in our streams.

OYSTER PEST CONTROL BILL VETOED BY PRESIDENT

ON FEBRUARY 26, President Roosevelt returned to Congress without approval the bill known as H. R. 4018, introduced by Congressman S. O. Bland, of Virginia, chairman of the House Committee on Merchant Marine Radio and Fisheries, which authorized the appropriation of $500,000 for the investigation, control and eradication of marine organisms injurious to shell-fish of the Atlantic and Gulf Coast States. This was the President's first veto of the present session, and in doing so he stated that he was not satisfied that "this very large appropriation" would accomplish the result that is hoped for. "I cannot get assurance of the probability of permanent eradication or of control of the marine pests," said the President. "Science has not yet discovered the answer. There is, on the other hand, every reason for further investigation and experimentation with hope that a practical answer may be found. Such work can be carried on by the Bureau of Fisheries under existing authority."

The situation with respect to starfish and drills in the North and Middle Atlantic States and the borer in the Gulf States is one of growing concern to the oyster industry. Dr. P. S. Galtsoff, in charge of the Bureau of Fisheries oyster investigations, has stated that a young starfish, less than a month old, destroys as many as six young oysters per day, and that in some sections 50 per cent of the oyster "spat" are killed by this pest within three months from the time of setting. The starfish paralyzes its prey with a poisonous secretion, then turns its own stomach inside out and inserts it into the opened shell of the oyster, where digestion takes place entirely outside of the body of the starfish. The drills and borers are marine snails whose mouth parts are hardened and adapted for rasping a hole in the shell of the oyster, through which a narcotic fluid is injected, causing the oyster to open its shell. Both the drill and the borer are very destructive to young oysters, and the leech, a species of flat worm, has caused enormous mortality on the oyster beds of Apalachicola Bay, Florida.

While H. R. 4018 was vetoed by the President, the Conservation Department understands that an appropriation of $250,000, attached to the Department of Commerce general appropriation bill, would still enable the Bureau of Fisheries to undertake an investigation of the oyster pests with a view toward their possible eradication. While it is uncertain at this time just what part of this appropriation will be made available for this work, it is felt that at least a start can be made.

The Conservation Department is particularly interested in the proposed investigations of the oyster enemies, because of the presence of the common oyster drill in certain Maryland waters, notably, Somerset and Worcester Counties, and of the danger of this pest spreading to other regions in the Bay. Accordingly, the Department has prepared a bill, which will be introduced at the present session of the Maryland General Assembly, to authorize the inspection of all seed oysters coming into Maryland from other states, for the purpose of planting, in order to detect the presence of the drill and similar enemies and prevent their introduction in other waters of the state. Particularly unfortunate is the presence of the drill in our new oyster-producing areas created by the inlet at Ocean City, and while they have been most plentiful close to the Maryland-Virginia boundry line, where oyster planting has been carried on for a number of years, it is hoped that by careful supervision of seed being planted in the Isle of Wight and Sinepuxent Bays, the spread of this pest may be controlled.

IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR FISHING INDUSTRY OF MARYLAND

THE FISHERY INDUSTRY of Chesapeake Bay has been hit in the last few years by the depression, and it has been difficult alike for individuals and old established firms to maintain their plants and give full employment to the people who are dependent upon these operations for their livelihood.

The Conservation Department is glad to call attention to the bill which passed last year and became effective on February 1, 1935. It reads as follows:

> "The Reconstruction Finance Corporation will make loans, under Section 15 of Public, No. 417, 73rd

Congress, to corporations, individuals and associations engaged in the production, storage, handling, packing, processing, carrying and/or orderly marketing of fish of American fisheries and/or products thereof.

"(a) All loans must be fully and adequately secured.

"(b) No loans shall be made upon foreign securities or foreign acceptances as collateral or for the purpose of assisting in the carrying or liquidation of such foreign securities and foreign acceptances.

"(c) The maturity of any loan shall not exceed five years from February 1, 1935.

"Loans will be made by the Corporation to the fishing industry upon the following terms and conditions, and for the following purposes:

A. Maturities

"Loans shall mature at such time within five years from February 1, 1935, as the Corporation may in each case determine. A program of payments will be required with a view to the borrower liquidating its debt within the period of time agreed upon,

B. Interest Rates

"Interest rates shall be determined in each case by the Corporation, but generally will not exceed 6%."

Further information will be supplied by writing direct to the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, Loan Division, Old Federal Reserve Building, Richmond, Virginia.

FISHERY EDUCATION PROGRAM IN PROGRESS

(*Continued from Page 9*)

The outcome of the program proposed has resulted in the formation by the industry, of a FISH AND SEA FOODS INSTITUTE OF THE UNITED STATES. Their program was launched at a luncheon at the Sherry-Netherlands Hotel in New York City on February 5. Commissioner Bell of the bureau, together with Miss Agnes I. Webster, also of the bureau, were present.

The latter is now in charge of cookery work of the bureau. Some of the most famous chefs in the country prepared a tempting nine course menu of fish and shellfish foods and a display of fish and sea-food dishes. A number of leading food authorities of the nation, including food editors of the nation representing the most prominent newspapers in the country and food economic writers of leading magazine publications were guests.

The success of the luncheon and "inaugural meeting" of the FISH AND SEA FOODS INSTITUTE OF THE UNITED STATES, has been reported in the newspapers and the popular news commentator of the air, Boake Carter, in his inimitable style, devoted considerable part of his program that evening describing what he termed "the most novel luncheon he ever attended" and paid high tribute to the service the members of the fishery industry were rendering the American people.

The net result of these various meetings therefore is this: That the formation of a FISH AND SEA FOODS INSTITUTE OF THE UNITED STATES has been accomplished by the industry, and they have accordingly embarked upon a year's educational program, which will no doubt be participated in by every unit of the Fishing Industry. It is sincerely believed that with every unit of the Fishing Industry lending their cooperation to Dr. Harden F. Taylor, Chairman, 111 John Street, New York City, and the other members of the Committee who are directing this great program, that much may be accomplished to educate the public in the valuable products of the fisheries.

FRANK T. BELL, *Commissioner,*
United States Bureau of Fisheries.

PLANS FOR SHELL AND SEED OYSTER PLANTING CONSIDERED

THE CONSERVATION COMMISSIONER held two important meetings with the Advisory Committee and other officers of the Department to consider shell and seed oyster plantings to be made during the coming spring months.

The first meeting was held in Annapolis on February 25, and the other meeting in Baltimore at the office of the Department on March 15.

With the budget allotment available for this work, it was decided that 500,000 bushels of shells and approximately 150,000 bushels of seed oysters could be transplanted, starting in

April. The members of the Advisory Committee are canvassing the packing houses of the State and will consult with the watermen's association on the location of the oyster bars where plantings are desired.

The season for catching oysters will not end until April 15, so the transfer of seed oysters will not start until April 16. Notice will be given to the State's oyster planters that they may be supplied with oysters taken by the dredge boats from the head of the Bay, which will be followed by the State transplanting of seed oysters to other sections where needed. At this time the exact areas to receive seed planting have not been determined, but this will be done during the next two weeks. It is likely that most of the dredge boats working at the head of the Bay during the season will take part in the spring work.

At the meeting on March 15 it was decided to move oysters from certain tributary waters where they are overcrowded to other areas where they have sufficient room for proper growth, and where they are less likely to suffer mortality. Whenever such removals have been made in the past, excellent results have been obtained. and the watermen are convinced that this is a proper conservation activity and helpful to their future supply.

THE 1934-5 DREDGING SEASON

MARCH 15 ended the oyster dredging season in Chesapeake Bay and tributaries, with the exception of the waters of Somerset County, where dredging is permitted until March 31.

The work at the head of the Bay undoubtedly caused a larger number of boats to fit out for dredging this year than usual, as there was a marked increase in the number licensed over last year—112 as against 62. Since Christmas there has been very little work, however, partly due to the freeze which closed the upper Bay with ice for a number of weeks, but chiefly to the condition of the oysters in the Chesapeake south of Sandy Point. The Potomac river being closed to dredging, a number of boats discontinued operations after the freeze. Smaller boats continued to work as their expenses were less than boats of large tonnage.

The spring transplanting work which is planned to begin on April 16, in the seed area at the head of Chesapeake Bay will enable many of the dredge boats to add to their season's earnings by freighting oysters for the planters and the State.